

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA
MISSOULA DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

TRAVIS JOHN BRANSON,

Defendant.

CR 23–55–M–DLC

ORDER

Before the Court is United States Magistrate Judge Kathleen L. DeSoto’s Findings & Recommendation Concerning Plea. (Doc. 28.) Because neither party objected, they are not entitled to *de novo* review. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); *United States v. Reyna-Tapia*, 328 F.3d 1114, 1121 (9th Cir. 2003). Therefore, the Court reviews the Findings and Recommendation for clear error. *McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Commodore Bus. Mach., Inc.*, 656 F.2d 1309, 1313 (9th Cir. 1981). Clear error exists if the Court is left with a “definite and firm conviction that a mistake has been committed.” *United States v. Syrax*, 235 F.3d 422, 427 (9th Cir. 2000).

Travis John Branson is charged with one count of conspiracy, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371 (Count 1), thirteen counts of unlawful trafficking of bald and golden eagles, in violation of 16 U.S.C. § 668(a) (Counts 2–14), and one count of

violation of the Lacey Act, in violation of 16 U.S.C. §§ 3372(a)(1) and 3373(d)(1)(B) (Count 15), as set forth in the Indictment. (Doc. 1.) Judge DeSoto recommends that this Court accept Mr. Branson's guilty plea as to Counts 1, 8, 9, and 15 after he appeared before her pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11. The Court finds no clear error in Judge DeSoto's Findings and Recommendation and adopts them in full, including the recommendation to defer acceptance of the Plea Agreement until sentencing when the Court will have reviewed the Plea Agreement and Presentence Investigation Report.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that Judge DeSoto's Findings and Recommendation (Doc. 28) is ADOPTED in full.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Mr. Branson's motion to change plea (Doc. 21) is GRANTED.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Travis John Branson is adjudged guilty as charged in Counts 1, 8, 9, and 15 of the Indictment.

DATED this 4th day of April, 2024.



Dana L. Christensen, District Judge
United States District Court